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ABSTRACT

This article proposes that minority students who might be successful in the education profession be evaluated for college entrance using an individually administered test of intelligence. More minorities with the appropriate educational background are needed in the education profession. Typical recruitment of minority students involves seeking schools with minorities of higher socioeconomic class. Endowment-rich institutions seek these students early, offering excellent scholarships. However, there is a large number of untapped minority students who may turn out to be excellent college candidates. Smaller, less affluent colleges may benefit from locating minority students whose intellectual profiles indicate average to above-average global intelligence with an overlay of socio-cultural deprivation, and who have not been maturationally ready to overcome these decremental factors before the end of high school. The following tactics may aid in this effort: (1) developing a network of trained recruiters to identify lower-achieving capable minorities, and rewarding the recruiter for each referred student accepted into the institution; (2) requesting a longitudinal file on the student to be sent to a screening committee; (3) conducting a battery of individual tests, including intelligence, achievement, interest, and personality measures; (4) orienting the student to college life; and (5) applying this procedure to other minority populations. This document contains four figures and seven references. (KS)

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RADICAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES FOR MINORITY EDUCATION STUDENTS

It is difficult to select at random a national journal in the field of teacher education in which no mention is made of the shortage of minority educators. There are cities which regularly contact certification officers in a search for such minority personnel. Institutions of higher learning provide special recruiters and counselors to locate minority students, and scholarship incentives abound at most institutions, regardless of overall funding difficulties. The statement that "We need more minority educators" is common fare within the profession where two or more gather to discuss the vagaries of hiring teachers or instructors. In the context of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Employment as it is enforced by the courts, this is certainly a true statement. Employers recognize the need to hire qualified minority applicants, and efforts are honestly made to do so, but the shortage continues despite all such endeavors. And why does this situation persist? Intelligent assessment of the dilemma suggests one principal hypothesis, beyond the entertainment of systematic racism as a causal phenomenon. Simply put, there exists a lack of minorities with the appropriate educational background to allow for employment in professional education.

In order to be employable in the broad field of professional education, the baccalaureate degree with appropriate professional training represents minimum qualifications. A graduate degree is desirable in most cases, and it is absolutely necessary for jobs beyond the secondary level. In fact, there is a veritable absence of minorities with these qualifications in many geographical areas. Part of this shortage results from a decreasing pool of qualified minority applicants taking degrees. In 1970 (Carnegie, 1971) there were 522,000 blacks in degree-credit programs in all institutions of higher learning. Of these, 343,000 (or 21%) of all 18-21 year old blacks were enrolled compared with 36% of 18-21 year old whites. In age groups appropriate to graduate study the situation worsens; only 7% of blacks were enrolled compared to 15% of whites. Even traditionally black colleges lost nearly half of such students by 1964. Indeed, by 1969, only 15% of hispanics and 15% of blacks between the ages of 25 and 34 had completed one of more years of college, contrasted with 30% whites who had completed one or more years of college. The trend was clearly established even then, and the preconditions for our present shortages were in place.

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A question that is even more difficult and controversial than why there are so few minority professionals available must be asked at this point. It remains for someone to explain why so few minorities enter college, even for one year, and why so many less reach degreed status. Here too, if one rejects the notion of some overt and ubiquitous racism, at least two major hypotheses may be considered: 1) the pool of minorities having intellectual ability to matriculate in an institution of higher learning is only large enough to provide a minimal number of degree candidates; or, 2) the pool of minorities with sufficient intelligence to succeed in college has not been accessed optimally. Both of these notions have their supporters, and it is worthwhile to examine their arguments briefly.

Arthur Jensen, Eysenck, Burt, Shuey, and more recently Canadian psychologist J. Phillipe Rushton, have all championed variations on the theme that genetic factors predetermine intelligence, and all have found a rather systematic set of relationships to prevail. In essence, they quote studies in which blacks are seen to have mean IQ's some fifteen (15) points lower than whites on tests of intelligence. Further, there seems little doubt that in actual test performance this is indeed the case (Richardson, 1972). The problem here is whether or not this reflects a real genetic difference in intellect, as opposed to differences proceeding from causes which are essentially environmental. It is useful to pursue the genetic argument a bit further before considering the second hypothesis. When one considers that this differential in mean IQ's between blacks and whites constitutes an entire standard deviation among the general population, certain relationships are possible. Consider the following statement (Deutsch, 1968): "In every region of the country, about 85 percent of Negro elementary and high school students scored below white averages on objective tests of scholastic ability and achievement."

Since intelligence and achievement are rather highly correlated (mostly around +.60), it seems reasonable to look at the two elements in tandem. To do so, a model may be helpful. If the distribution of intelligence in blacks is not significantly different than it is in whites beyond the lower mean value, although sufficient study has not been done to demonstrate this for certain, then the following juxtaposition of curves might be instructive. (See Figure 1) The upper curve represents the general population, which is of course most heavily loaded with whites, and in which the black population is largely balanced by an

oriental presence whose intelligence exceeds whites if one can believe Jensen. At the mean, one sees the intelligence point around which average achievement will tend to cluster. Projecting downward from the mean (IQ = 100) of the upper curve, one finds the corresponding IQ score along the base of the black curve. Please note, however, that this score of 100 is at or near the 85th percentile rather than the 50th. Essentially, one might theorize that some 85% of blacks have scores lower than the exact mean on the white curve. If this is indeed so, then it becomes obvious that proponents of genetically determined intelligence can find support in Deutsch's statement for asserting that intelligence and achievement among blacks is proportional and understandable. Further, the argument might be made that monies expended in efforts to exceed this proportion are ill-spent, and that college attendance among blacks is very much in line with what we know concerning the intelligence required to succeed there. Mean IQ among college graduates is about 115, though the median and modal figures are probably more representative of the population.

Needless to say, the foregoing argument is both politically and philosophically distasteful to large segments of the populace. Because this is so, these arguments have been forcefully challenged by researchers holding antagonistic positions. These individuals advance a number of alternative hypotheses to explain the testing differential in intelligence, though most do not contest the actual scores. Some discuss bias in the tests, others nutritional influences, and still others dwell upon environmental factors such as lack of enrichment, poor schooling, less time in class, and socioeconomics. Drs. Breslow and Klein at the University of California have developed a model based upon all of these factors in conjunction with physical health to explain the achievement and degree disparity that has been noted (Richardson, 1972). In the final analysis, it is difficult to say that one school of thought or the other has produced the most convincing constellation of evidence, but perhaps the point is ultimately moot.

A more eclectic view is seen in the following quotation (Dobzhansky, 1973): "People need not be branded elites and commonality." He goes on to tell us, "Finally, again one must stress that the diversity we observe is a joint product of genetic and environmental differences." The large societal inferences one may draw from his ideas include the presence of genetic differentials, but they reject simultaneously the notion that one must accept the continuation of a permanent underclass on genetic grounds. Indeed, he

says that equality of opportunity requires equal access to the competition for position and wealth in a society, and education is the great common denominator in such struggle. And so, in the final analysis, it is not necessary to disprove the Jensens and Rushtons. It is merely necessary to recognize that there is room within the explanation of their findings for the insertion of remediable environmental phenomena which have been theorized by other competent investigators. Further, it is not necessary to prove that the pool of minority students is equally as large as it is among whites. It is necessary, however, to maximize the number of candidates from the minority pool who are willing and able to undertake the acquisition of a college degree and professional training.

This statement brings one to the second hypothesis propounded earlier: that the pool of minority candidates has not been appropriately accessed by recruiters. It is worthwhile to demonstrate how this is so, for better recruitment strategies are demanded if the situation is to be remediated. First, let us examine the manner in which minority candidates are presently recruited.

The procedure of choice in minority recruiting has been more akin to a championship bass tournament than it has to a scientific endeavor. Those institutions most interested in "landing" the best and brightest minority candidates follow the time-honored three-step process: 1) locate a "hot" hole as early as possible; 2) fish it first, before anyone else intrudes; and, 3) bring better "bait" than the next guy. It is a technique guaranteed to make one competitive with all other contenders, but it is essentially a flawed metaphor in terms of minority recruitment. We shall see why this is so, but first the useful aspects of this strategy must be examined.

A "hot" hole, in recruitment terminology, is a place where minorities of higher socioeconomic class "school." And although one doubts the existence of a "baiting" conspiracy, there is another fishing analogy which might be employed here. Just as one might, if he were unethical, "bait" a spot with grain, so are the brightest minority students gathered together. Typically they spring from parents who are more academically able, and these parents have congregated around areas where more economic wealth is available. It is, in a sense, a sort of Marxian brain-drain which creates these "hot" holes. But once created, they become a fertile field for recruiting minority students who are capable of doing well academically.

Further, these tend to be highly motivated and mature students who will (as opposed to "can") do well. And the proof of all this is found in their scores on the usual variables scanned to locate prime candidates. Classroom grades, ranking in graduation class, SAT scores, ACT scores, and subsidiary academic honors are all utilized to screen this population. So much for part "1" of the strategy.

The second part is simple. Better funded institutions hire personnel to get into the field early, get to know the best candidates, and make them acquainted with their employing entity. Having become familiar to them, and this is not new to athletic recruiters who have used this tactic time-out-of-mind, the students are not easily swayed by offers from institutions who come to them later, either by choice or by economic necessity.

The third phase is also easy for endowment-rich institutions, for they are well aware that money is the best bait of all. Since they are able to offer excellent scholarship opportunities at expensive, prestigious campuses, it is no wonder that these minority students swim through myriad offers until the most attractive bait appears. They bite! The chase is over, the student netted securely. It is a good strategy, and none the worse for the fact that many institutions utilize it. It does have, however, inherent problems, and these must be first elucidated and then ameliorated.

Like all "hot" holes, these areas tend to be fished by large numbers of institutions, and they share the tendency of such places quickly to become "fished out." And when all of these desirable candidates have gone to Harvard, Yale, or some other academic paradise, there are few left for less financially fortunate schools to gaff. Now common sense will dictate that this situation is not likely to change so long as demand outruns supply among minority college candidates. Luckily, however, there are less exhausted waters one may fish, if he is dedicated to the task and willing to use less traditional tackle. This is true because of the second major problem with "hot" hole strategy, though it is not an easy one to solve.

Out in the hinterlands, where economic rewards are thinner, there exists an entire population of minority students, any one of whom may turn out to be an excellent college candidate. Further, in schools which have a lesser density of high achieving minority students, smaller and poorer colleges benefit from the fact that cost-benefit ratios for recruiting in such locales seem to deter the richer programs from

expending their best efforts. Thus, competition is not so keen here, and the chances of successfully recruiting students are multiplied. Indeed, socioeconomic factors seem to be as important as ethnic ones in effect upon college attendance. While it is known that college and university students come largely from middle and upper income families, it is worthwhile to note that in the graduating class of 1961, 61% of male graduates in the highest quartile of high school achievement and the lowest socioeconomic quartile did enter college in the year after graduation. In that same year, however, a robust 92% of males in the highest achievement quartile and the highest socioeconomic quartile entered college (Carnegie, 1971). The disparity in female graduates was even more pronounced. It seems clear, then, that poorer institutions must fish in waters more rife with low achieving students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. This is, however, a blessing as much as a curse if one fishes wisely and well.

While high school grade point average, standardized achievement test scores, and socioeconomic status offer perhaps the best constellation of selection variables for recruiters, there is another which can profitably be employed. And yet it is a technique so controversial, albeit reasonable, that one hardly dares whisper the words. Intelligence tests! To circumvent, at this point, the issue of the evaluative merit of standardized tests for minorities, two important points should be clarified. First, these tests are not nearly so biased as one may be led to believe by zealous rhetoric. In the two major test cases, California and Illinois, the results from courts were enlightening. In California, where intelligence tests were being administered to children of primarily Spanish-speaking background, they were rightly held to be biased when given in English. In Illinois, where the minority in question was black, the judge took the theretofore unheard of step of reading the test (Wechsler, in both cases) and found it not to contain significant amounts of material prejudicial to minority success. As it turns out, the major test publishers have become extremely sensitive to such criticisms, and their norms have long since been restandardized to include proportional minority representation in sampling. At this point in history, the problem is less science than emotion, but this too is difficult to resolve.

Scientists have called into question the notion expressed by Jensen and others that the fifteen-point intelligence discrepancy between blacks and whites is genetically determined (Weinberg, 1975). Weinberg

refers to the complex of factors herein previously mentioned as a structure of discouragement; a system that makes it more difficult for minority students to benefit optimally from their schooling. When one adds to this the final factor, which one may justifiably call maturity, he has discovered both that curse and that blessing to which allusions have previously been made. A personal example may serve to illustrate the point. As a child from the lower socioeconomic classes, I had no way to develop a vision of myself becoming upwardly mobile through intellect and achievement. My parents, both working people, had no such vision to offer me. The sum total of counseling I received was from my mother, a legal secretary, when she sent me off to college with the admonition to "learn typing." Never did anyone point out my capabilities in comparison with medical doctors, lawyers, or captains of industry. It was outside their capacity to imagine, and hence outside mine for too many years. Many minority students are faced with this situation, but compounded by the fact of their ethnicity, and it is no surprise that they become outer-directed and waste their energies in less mature pursuits. And yet they are there, these bright young people. They have not yet turned their hands to traditional academic achievement, but they await only the vision and opportunity for epiphany. It remains for us to provide it, but the search will require both patience and courage. The reasons are clear.

Minorities, already hypersensitive to criticism by the majority, have become paranoid about normative measurement. They have traditionally scored lower on such measures than have the majority, and they have a deep-seated, inchoate fear that perhaps Jensen and the geneticists are correct. Those who would remedy this situation and draw more minority students into the profession must combat this spectre with facts. Fortunately, they are available if too frequently unknown or unspoken.

In particular, with reference to scores on individually administered intelligence tests such as the Wechsler series, it is entirely possible to arrive at a conclusion as to the likelihood that a student is being victimized partly by sociocultural factors rather than by genetically-ordained low intelligence. The intelligent examiner is able to read his instrument for subtest scatter which may point in the direction of a bright, college-capable student whose overall IQ has been spuriously lowered on sociocultural grounds. In a recent monograph, this notion has been reaffirmed (Searls, 1985). Three Wechsler subtests, Information,

Vocabulary, and Comprehension, have been shown to be more sensitive than other such subtests to a deprived background. This is only reasonable. The first, Information, depends upon a rich knowledge base not available to disadvantaged environments. The next, Vocabulary, depends upon early and continued access to a wide variety of words not seen in the disadvantaged milieu. The last, Comprehension, is highly correlated with family teaching among those who have the knowledge, leisure, and resources to indulge in ethical and moral discourse and behavior. All of these yield to direct instruction, but there must be access to qualified instructors in appropriate learning environments. These tests are considered significantly low when they vary at least three (3) points below the average of one's own scores on the total test or relevant subdivisions thereof (Kaufman, 1981). This is especially important where automatic cognitive skills not very sensitive to teaching are elevated significantly. Such automatic skills might include those measured by the Digit Span, Coding, or Similarities subtests. It is instructive to examine such a profile briefly. It is also useful to foil it off against some other profiles that do not share the specific diagnostic characteristics already mentioned. In Figure 2, please note that the deprivation-sensitive subtests are all on the Left side of the chart. These are the Verbal subtests, and they are largely mediated by the Left cerebral hemisphere. Note also that they are capitalized, unlike less sensitive subtests, for ease of discovery. A dash-line is drawn across the face of the profile at the mean (9.6) level, and this makes it easy to locate significantly variant (+ 3 points) subtests. Significantly low subtests have been coded with an "L" if low, and with an "H" if high. Note that compared to the overall mean of 9.6, two deprivation-sensitive subtests are Low and another is borderline. Two less-sensitive subtests are High, and one borderline. There is strong likelihood here that one is working with a socioculturally deprived individual who may well be more capable than his test scores on the achievement related triad would indicate. This student would be unlikely to be a high-achieving student in his other academic measures, and yet might finally become a college graduate with motivation and opportunity. Other factors go into this as well, and these will be discussed shortly. For now, let us consider Figure 3, noting that none of the subtest scores varies three points from the 4.7 average. Note also that an average this low, in the absence of some relieving subtest highs, would indicate a mildly retarded student with almost no probability that the problem is caused or seriously exacerbated by sociocultural

deprivation. This is a student who gives no indication that college recruitment efforts would be justified, as his intelligence is quite reasonably correlated with the sort of achievement measures that do not attract more traditional college recruiters either. Figure 4 is typical of a student with intelligence minutely above average. This profile does not suggest sociocultural deprivation, and one notices immediately that the three most critical diagnostic subtests are not significantly different from the 10.3 mean indicated by the dash line. This is, indeed, a fairly common sort of profile to see among blacks who have done well in class and on standardized achievement tests. Once those who have done brilliantly on these measures have chosen colleges, students with this sort of profile are in the next echelon of recruits. Feasibility of college success is good, and these are usually spotted by the first line of high-probability recruiters.

For smaller, less affluent institutions, the thrust must be toward locating minority students whose intellectual profiles indicate average to above-average global intelligence with an overlay of socio-cultural deprivation, and who have not been maturationally ready to overcome these decremental factors before the end of high school. The problem, as always, is how to find a substantial pool of such talent, and how to motivate and nurture it in the college setting. Following are some tactics that might prove workable in this regard.

1. Develop a regional or national network of "talent scouts" who, armed with literature specifying target behaviors and characteristics indicative of the lower-achieving capable, are reinforced on a <u>per capita</u> basis for each student referral accepted into the institution of higher learning.

It is good to keep in mind that most of us make decisions about who is "smart" or "stupid" on bases less scientific than intelligence tests. We observe the behaviors of those around us and conclude, on weight of evidence, whether the person does more or less of what we consider "smart" stuff. If this seems a bit colloquial for such an arcane topic, it is no less true for its simplicity. Students who seem quick on the uptake, notice the details and nuances of their environments, know the words to all the latest songs, can repair cars or motorcycles, and have a comprehension of current events: these would be fodder for further evaluation. Students who are good athletes, who draw well or write intelligible poetry for fun, or who excel in music, drama, or the dance might well fit into this category. Many of these will learn, too late, that they

can function in academics despite their failure to do so at the most critical time. The natural observer, the on-site talent scout, would likely be a teacher who has been with the student on a daily basis over several years, but other possible referral sources would include coaches, peers, parents, relatives, and the student himself. Once referred, the student would become the object of a screening effort designed to prevent the expenditure of time and resources on an individual with little indication of intelligence greater than current achievement would suggest.

2. Request that a longitudinal file of the student's achievement measures, both normative and less formal, be sent to a committee of experts for screening. This file should also contain data on achievement in non-academic areas, as well as narrative support from the referral person.

The critical element here is to have on the committee experts in the evaluative process. In particular, the psychologist or examiner should have demonstrated ability to go beyond computerized or cookbook analysis of scores, and to make sophisticated judgements as to a student's real capacities. If there are enough indicators of college capability, the student should be further evaluated.

3. Conduct a full battery of individual tests including intelligence, achievement, interest, and personality measures.

It is necessary to realize that group tests, of the kinds most schools administer to students en masse, confound their own results by demanding adequate reading skills and assuming motivation on the part of students. There are in the world intelligent students who do not read well, and others who have not yet been filled with the divine fire to become more than what they are through education. Individual tests tend to minimize these problems, and their evaluation allows for clinical observation and appraisal of specific subskills that relate to intelligence, and to academic achievement. They are, in a word, superior, and such instruments are seldom brought to bear on students who are neither retarded nor noticeably learning disabled. They are more expensive instruments, but these underachieving capables are worth more than what will be expended on better tests. Once a student has been located and selected, however, the job is far from done. It remains to enhance probability of success in the college setting, and this is not an outcome that can lightly be taken for granted.

4. Orient the student to college life, providing necessary academic and personal support during the transition period.

When students have not matured enough to achieve on their own by the time they are some 18 years of age and exiting 12th grade, it is hardly reasonable to assume they will suddenly become success-oriented scholars as a result of diagnostic testing and the fact of recruitment. To ease the transition, such students should enter college in the summer before their first long term. In this time,the student should receive a thorough orientation to all facets of campus life. He should take a course in study skills, and he should be assigned a transition counselor for regular weekly meetings. He should have requisite tutorials until his success rate in classes is established as adequate, and his extracurricular activity should be balanced with sufficient study time. If necessary, since many such students will not come from affluent homes, the transition counselor should work with them in management of their financial affairs also. Requisite funding sources should be maintained (e.g., rehabilitation services), and aid from the college should be available as well.

5. Apply this same procedure to other populations of interest containing minorities who might fit the general intellectual profile associated with success as educators.

Other prime sources for referrals to this process might include government agencies having programs which impact low-achieving or otherwise educationally delayed minorities. Referrals might be sought from administrators, counselors, eligibility workers, caseworkers, and others who have significant contact with such clients. One could also seek referrals from the clients themselves or from their peers.

Pools of such clients might be found among recipients of Social Security, SSI, Food Stamps, and Aid For Dependent Children. Subsidized housing rolls (HUD) might also offer appropriate candidates. The same might be said of state rehabilitation services and programs such as Project Success. Such agencies and programs have multiple interconnections with persons who have been chronically unemployed and underemployed, often due to socioeconomic disadvantage and concomitant underachievement. They also access clients who may have been in physical labor and who, due to illness or injury must retrain in lighter work. These should offer a fertile, if smaller, field from which can be drawn at least a minimal number of

minorities who have the intellectual capacity to benefit from identification as capable underachievers appropriate to nontraditional training for prospective educators. Once identified, these individuals would be supported in the same manner as would students who have been dealt with at length above.

It is not reasonable to suppose that such a program as this would begin on a large scale. Opposition, even organized opposition from groups with vested interests antagonistic to realistic evaluation of minority ability, must be expected. Further, without broad government funding, which might be beneficial if it could be acquired, institutions would be limited as to the amount of such searching they could support. Additionally, acquired paranoia about intelligence testing would have to be overcome, and this would not be easy with a population mired in historically poor self-esteem coupled with scientific findings that seem to partially reinforce it. The sales pitch, if you will, becomes of paramount importance here, albeit on a case-by-case basis. Parents, wanting the best for their children, must be convinced that this is an avenue to the American Dream which has remained massively unexplored in the past. And once a few such children do succeed and take their rightful places in mainstream society, the job will become exponentially easier. The hardest sell, up until now, has been the academic community itself.

Until the academic moneybelts accept the premise which is here propounded, and until they begin to act upon it as suggested, the situation will remain static at best. Good young minds will falter in the early going, settle for less occupationally, and fester in dissatisfaction through a lifetime of underemployment. Can we afford, through a triage approach to recruitment, the loss of an Einstein, a Hawking, or a George Washington Carver? I think not, and it is high time for those who agree to stand up and be counted. To do otherwise is, it seems, is an implicit endorsement of the not-yet-proved notion that minorities are genetically, and irremediably, of inferior intellect.

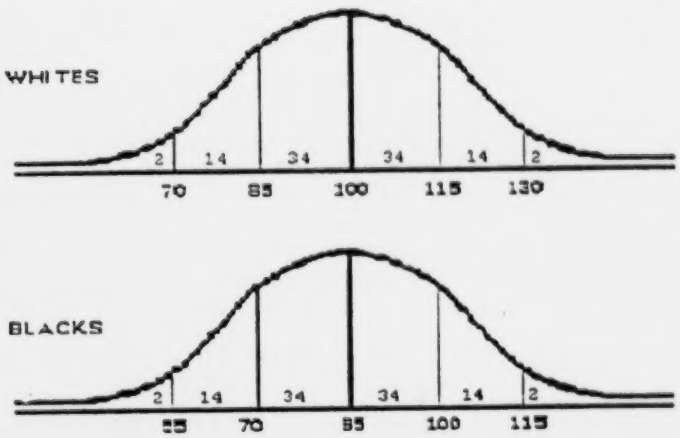

Fig. 1: Hypothetical Juxtaposition

FACSIMILE OF WECHSLER PROFILE

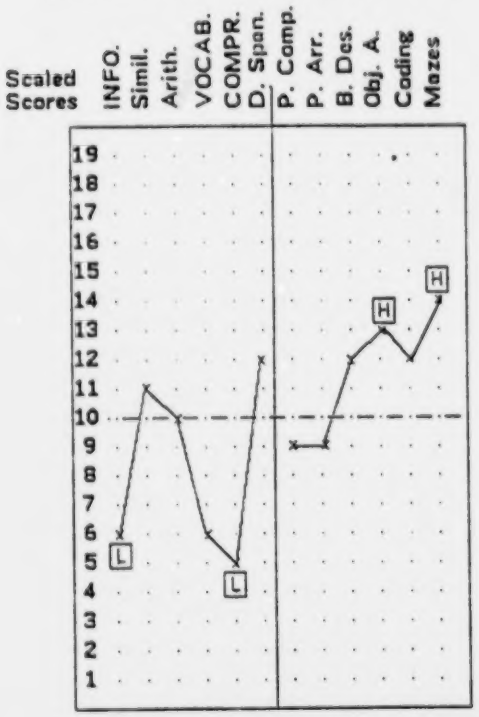

Fig. 2: Note that the mean of the first 5 subtests on both sides combined is 96/10=9.6

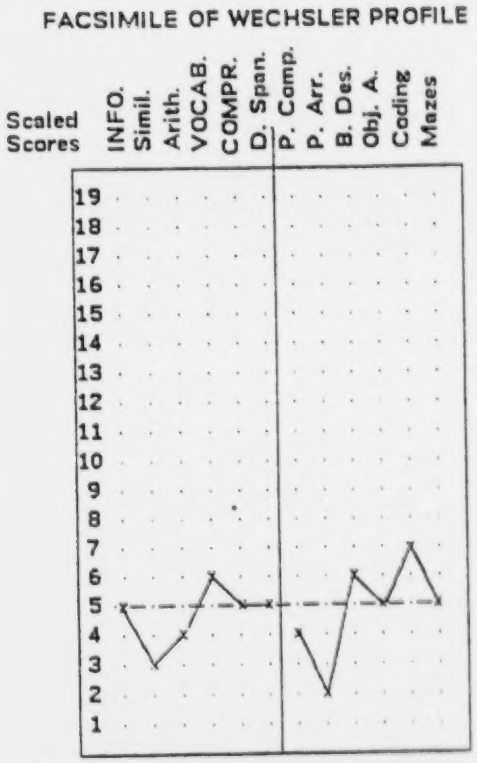

Fig. 3: The mean of the 10 pertinent subtests is 47/10=4.7

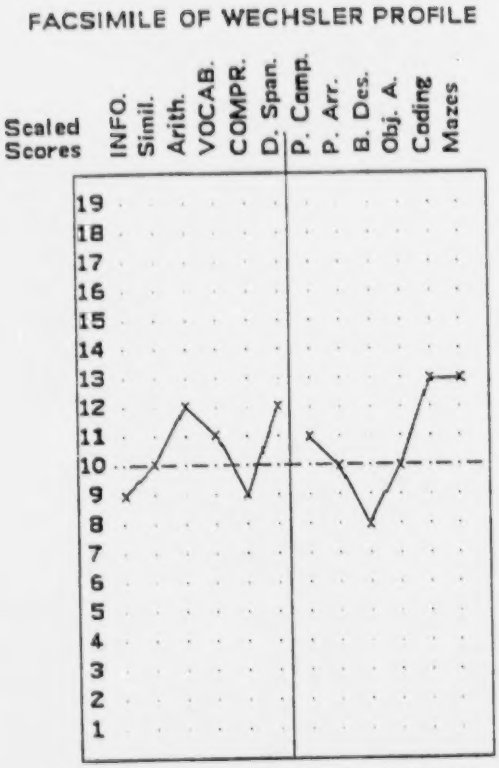

Fig. 4: The mean of the 10 pertinent is 130/10=10.3

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